



INTERSTATE 81 ISSUES IN VIRGINIA

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I-81 Issues

- **Current Conditions**
- **Ongoing Improvements**
- **Highway Safety Corridor Program**
- **Tolling I-81**
- **Corridor Improvement Study**
- **PPTA**
- **Public Involvement**

Current Conditions

- 325 miles – 90 interchanges
- Rolling and mountainous terrain
- 29 colleges and universities
- ADT doubled from 25,000 vehicles in 1990 to 50,000 vehicles in 2000



Current Conditions



- Designed for 15% trucks; now 20%-40%
- One of top eight truck routes in the U.S.

Ongoing Improvements

- Widening of bridges near Lexington
- Safety enhancements through Roanoke and New River valleys
- New interchange and C/D roads at Christiansburg
- 7 miles widened at Bristol



Highway Safety Corridor

- Legislation allows roads to qualify
- 15 miles near Roanoke designated Jan. 13, 2004
- ***26% reduction in crashes in first three months***



Tolling I-81

- VDOT is applying for tolling, in the event the CTB and FHWA approve major improvements



Tolling I-81

- **March 5, 2003 – VDOT submitted application to FHWA under Section 1216(b) of TEA-21**
- **Requested approval for I-81 to participate in the Interstate Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Pilot Program**
- **3 slots available nationwide**

Tolling I-81

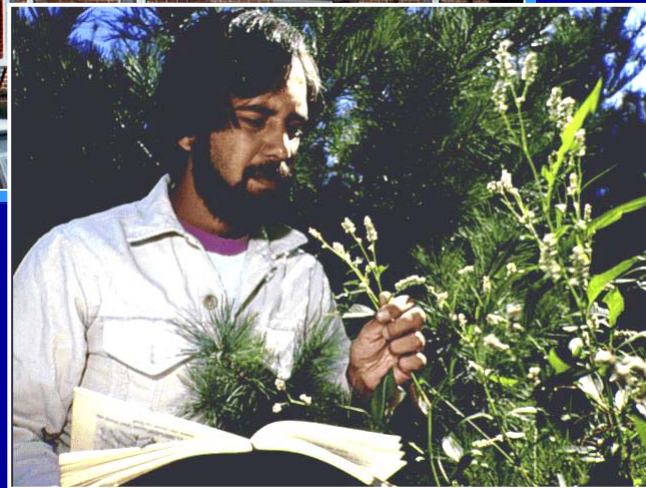
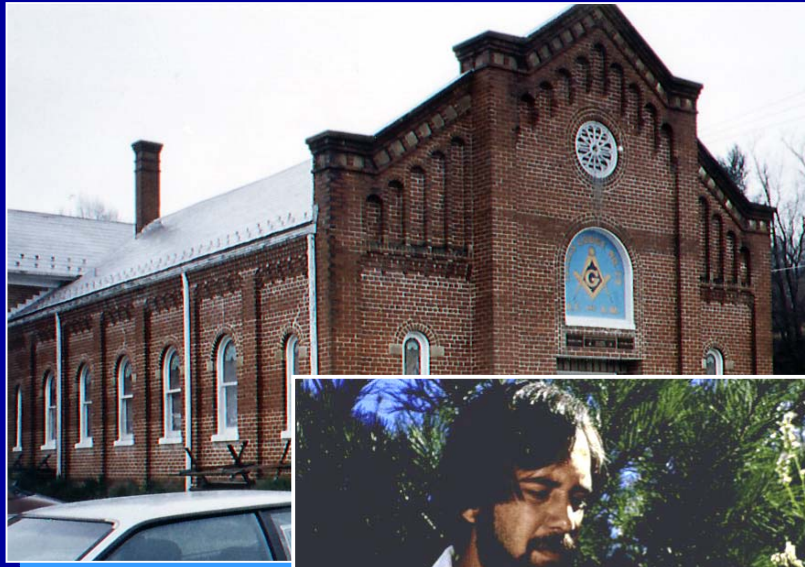
- **March 27, 2003 - FHWA granted “conditional provisional acceptance”**
- **Agreed to allow Virginia to proceed to Phase 2 of the application process**
- **October 2003 - FHWA and VDOT began to identify actions needed prior to final approval**

Tolling I-81

Actions Needed Prior to Final Approval

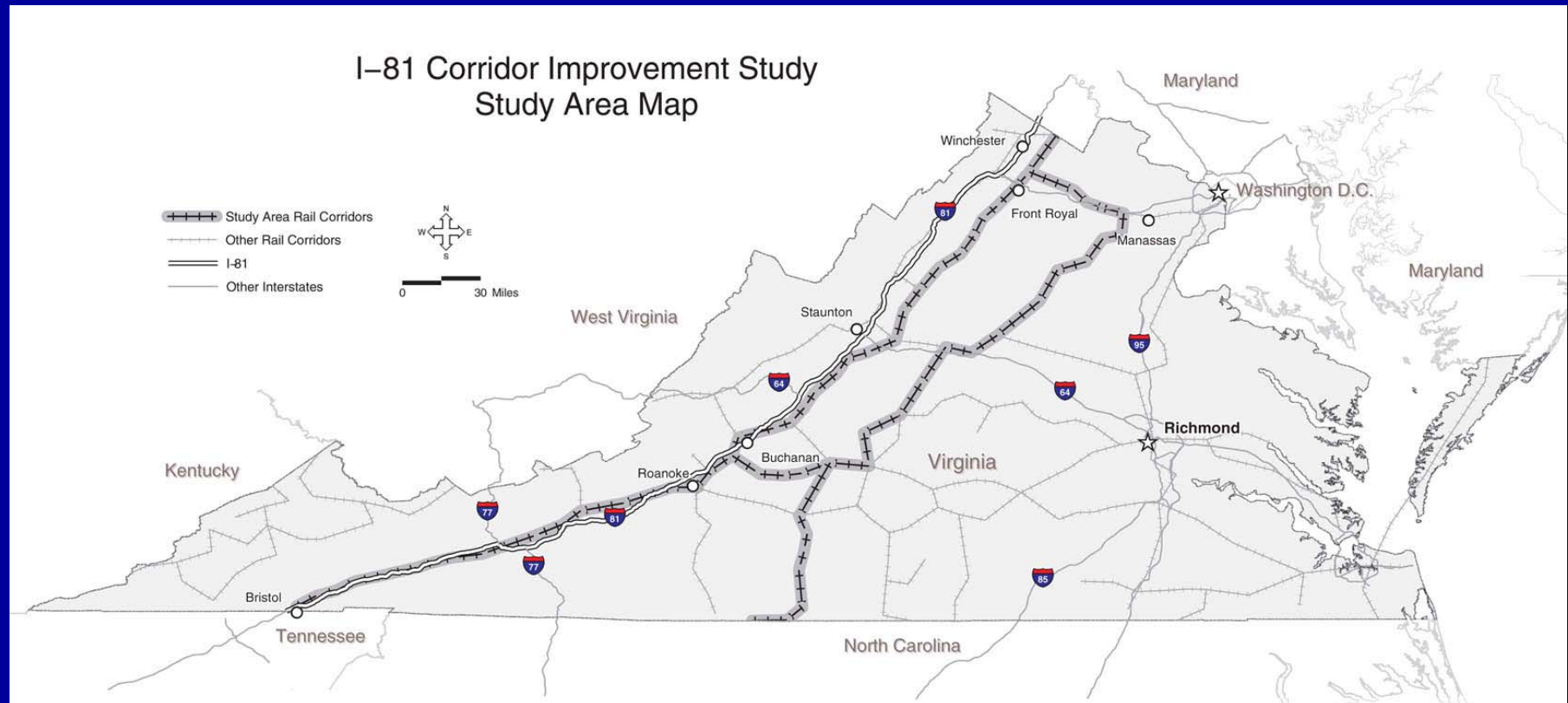
- MPO Consultation
- Pilot Study Work Plan
- NEPA Process, Tier 1
- Environmental Scoping Analysis
- Basic Financial Plan
- Project Management Plan
- Public Involvement Plan
- Agreement(s) between FHWA and VDOT

I-81 Corridor Improvement Study



- **NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act)**
 - Helps public officials make decisions
 - Helps protect natural and cultural resources

I-81 Corridor Study Map



Corridor Improvement Study

- Tiered EIS process
 - Tier 1: corridor-wide issues
 - Tier 2: site-specific issues



Corridor Improvement Study

- Tier 1 corridor-wide decisions



- Concepts for highway and rail

- Number of lanes
- Partial or complete separation of trucks and cars
- Additional rail capacity

- Approval to advance I-81 as a toll pilot

Corridor Improvement Study

Study elements:

- Problem identification
- Concept development
- Environmental analyses



Corridor Improvement Study

Schedule:

- Draft Tier 1 EIS – early 2005
- Public hearings – early spring 2005
- CTB action – spring 2005
- Final Tier 1 EIS – summer 2005
- Tier 1 ROD – fall 2005

Corridor Improvement Study

Technical Analyses in Tier 2:

- Land Use
- Parklands
- Farmlands
- Hazardous Materials
- Displacements
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Neighborhoods
- Community Resources
- Traffic
- Historical, Archaeological and Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Natural Resources Including:
 - Wetlands
 - Threatened and Endangered Species
 - Water Quality
 - Visual Effects

PPTA

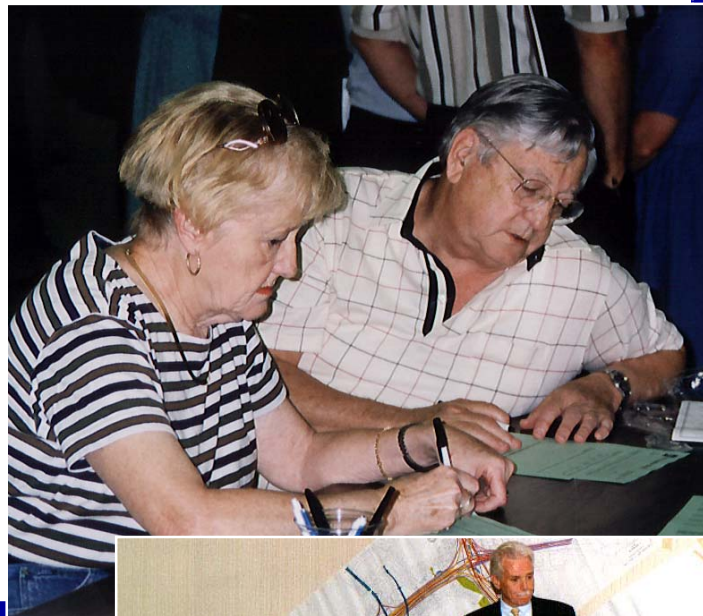
Public Private Transportation Act of 1995

- Under PPTA, a Virginia purchasing law, VDOT solicited proposals to design, build, maintain and/or operate all or parts of I-81
- March 5, 2004 - Commissioner directed VDOT to begin negotiations with STAR
- I-81 Corridor Improvement Study will help determine what can be built

PPTA

- **Selection of STAR Solutions DOES NOT mean we have decided to build separate lanes for trucks**
- **What's next with STAR Solutions?**
 - Negotiating teams are meeting
 - Identifying potential items to be included in comprehensive agreement

I-81 Public Involvement



- **Opportunities**

- Attend public meetings/hearings
- Send E-mail to 81info@VirginiaDOT.org
- Write letters to Program Manager
- Get more information!
 - VirginiaDOT.org
 - Newsletter
 - Presentations



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